(b) whether Government have pointed out that aggressively pursuing growth in tea production and export without proper assessment is not useful;

(c) whether the World Bank had clearly intimated the tea industry and the Board that they are willing to provide loan to raise tea production in five years;

(d) if so, whether the World Bank's views have been considered and accepted; and

(e) by when the World Bank has agreed to provide loan?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH): (a) to (e) A project for financial assistance to the tune of Rs. 2216.50 crore for development of tea industry in the country has been submitted to the World Bank. The project envisages increase in tea production mainly through productivity gains to meet the anticipated increases in the domestic demand for tea and to sustain exports. The project is under the Bank's consideration and there is not commitment as yet from the Bank that assistance will be available for the project. At the World Bank's instance five Working Groups have been constituted to make in depth analysis of the various issues and aspects of the Project. Reports of these Working Groups are expected shortly.

Wage hike in loss making PSUs

*347. PROF. NAUNIHAL SINGH: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Government are considering wage hike for executives and non-unionised supervisors for the loss making public sector undertakings;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether there are any conditions attached to this move; if so, the details thereof; and

(d) whether this would be an unprofessional and unbusiness like move; if not the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN): (a) to (d) Wage hike for executives and non-unionised supervisors for the loss making public sector undertakings following IDA scales are permitted, provided they fulfil the conditions stipulated in the Govt. guidelines issued on 19.7.1995. These, inter-alia, state that loss making enterprises would also be allowed to adopt revised scales of pay w.e.f. 1.1.92, with the approval of the Govt. provided the said PSUs give an estimate as to how resources would be generated by them to meet the extra expenditure without any budgetary support.

Subsidised foodgrains for the poorer sections

*348. SHRI ASHOK MITRA:
SHRI SANATAN BISI:

Will the Minister of CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the scheme of supplying foodgrains to the poorer sections of the population at prices which are one-half of prices currently charged has been finalised;

(b) the total annual subsidy the implementation of the project is likely to cost; and

(c) measures proposed to raise money to cover this cost?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD AND MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) The scheme for streamling the Public Distribution System with focus on the poor by supplying specially subsidised foodgrains to the population below poverty line is under consideration of the Government.